



**Bowdoin
Hillel**

In 2002, the 30-year-old “Bowdoin Jewish Organization” officially affiliated with the national Hillel organization and became the “Bowdoin Hillel”. Since then, the group has emerged as one of the most active student organizations on campus and among Jewish college associations in Maine. Attracting over 150 members, Bowdoin was one of the few colleges awarded a 2006 Soref Advancement Initiative grant—funding directed towards small campuses with emerging Jewish communities—from the national Hillel organization in recognition of the organization’s rapid growth and continued commitment to Jewish life.

The Bowdoin Hillel seeks to enrich Jewish religious, cultural and social life both in and around the Bowdoin College campus. It strives to reach out to all Jewish students, regardless of religious background or education, by offering a diverse range of events: weekly candelighting ceremonies, Shabbat dinners twice each month, Sukkah building, Yom Hashoah commemorations, home-cooked kosher barbecues, holiday parties and Jewish movie nights. In addition, a rabbi travels to Bowdoin to lead High Holiday services each year, attracting local community members, alumni, students, faculty, and staff. High Holiday observances also include delicious dinners with traditional Jewish food prepared by Bowdoin’s award-winning dining staff. An annual student-led Passover Seder is one of our most enjoyed events, with attendance exceeding 125 participants.

Activities and Programs

To build relationships with other student groups, Hillel often co-sponsors programs with a diverse range of political, religious, and social organizations as well as academic departments. Events have included inter-faith Habitat-for-Humanity builds, dinners, speakers, and film screenings for the Maine Jewish Film Festival. The Bowdoin Hillel also sponsors a wide array of invited speakers, e.g. Israeli journalists, Middle East policy experts, stand-up comedians, authors and academic scholars. The majority of events are open to the public.

Facilities

Bowdoin Hillel headquarters is located in the newly renovated Multi-Cultural Center at 30 College Street. The Center provides a comfortable space for meetings, storage for the Torah and Ark—both donated to the Bowdoin Hillel in 2005—and a student/staff-designed Kosher kitchen available for holiday cooking and social gatherings.



Study Abroad Israel and Taglit-Birthright

In coordination with Bowdoin’s Off-Campus Study Office, several Bowdoin students have elected to study abroad in Israel in recent years. Programs have included the School for Overseas Students at Tel Aviv University, the Rothberg International School at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, the International School at the University of Haifa, and the Overseas Student Program at Ben Gurion University of the Negev.



In addition to immersing themselves in Israeli culture through classes that explore Israeli politics, Middle East history, and conversational Hebrew, engaging in extensive travel in and around Israel grants students an opportunity to witness the complex issues discussed in their courses as well as to experience the diversity of life in the modern Middle East.

Bowdoin Hillel members also have been among the 180,000 young Jewish adults who have traveled to Israel through the Taglit-Birthright program. This cost-free, ten day, whirlwind tour enables young Jews from around the world to experience the “holy land” with peers and guided sight-seeing. Bowdoin students have participated in both the summer and winter trips, choosing to travel with Hillel, Oranim, Israel Outdoors! and Israel Experts programs.

Bowdoin Hillel

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Bowdoin

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Tzedakah and Other Projects

Recent activities include:

- Fundraisers for Darfur and Mazon
- Bowdoin Hillel Common Good Day
- Interfaith Dinners
- Interfaith Habitat for Humanity Builds

Social Activities

Recent activities include:

- Freshman orientation bagels on the quad
- Tot Shabbat with local community members
- Semi-annual trip to the China Rose Buffet restaurant
- Latkes at Ladd
- Purim party
- Bagels and lox brunches
- Concert with the Afro-Semitic music ensemble
- "Stand up for Peace" comedy event
- Hillel hiking trip
- Weekend retreat at the Coastal Studies Center



Bowdoin Hillel activities are funded by Student Activities Office and through the generosity of the alumni and friends of the college through gifts made to the Leah and Samuel Osher Hillel Fund

For more information, visit:
<http://studorgs.bowdoin.edu/hillel/>